159. Social disabilities of Ezhavas and other backward classes.

Mr. N. R. Krishnan (Member, Nominated), while feeling thankful to Government for allowing Ezhavas representation in the Legislative Council and for the removal of several of their disabilities, submitted that their new grievance was that the law courts had been disposing of some pollution cases in a manner prejudicial to the interests of the Ezhava and other communities. He was of opinion that pollution cases like the Kadakavur temple case should be disposed of by a Full Bench of the High Court. The Member then explained how the order prohibiting the Ezhavas from conducting a procession in honor of their religious head through the public road at Alleppey had resulted in a grievance to the community as a whole and prayed for its immediate annulment. Lastly, he spoke against the practice of notice-boards being put up near temples prohibiting the entry of Ezhavas and other classes within certain prescribed limits and submitted that such prohibitions affected their sense of self-respect and were a source of considerable inconvenience in other ways.

Dewan's reply.—Noted.

160. The removal of all kinds of racial bar in the matter of admission to the public service.

Rev. Fr. John (Member, T. I. C., Parur) prefaced his representation with the observation that the people believed that a favourable reply would be given to the deputation of the Civic Rights League that waited on the Dewan. But they were disappointed and he had again to make his representation. The reply given at the last session of the Assembly was consoling to them and that was the reason for their not bringing the subject at this year's session. Many people were afraid that the answer given to the deputation would lead to some untoward results. If no such thing happened, it was due to the loyalty of the people and the good sense and influence of their leaders. It was thought that the agitation was set up for securing more Government appointments. But the Member urged that the people did recognise that agriculture and trade were better than Government appointments as could be easily seen from the large number of companies floated on account of private enterprise. The object of the agitation was, therefore, not to obtain Government appointments but to assert their rights as citizens and secure them, so as to ensure effective cooperation of all people in the State for the advancement of the country. Their right briefly was that they should have admission into the Revenue Department, and if the fact that the management of Devaswoms was now vested in the Revenue Department was a bar to the right being granted to them, then the separation of the two departments should be effected. The Revenue Department was the most important in the State and if the members of the Christian and other communities who constituted 26 lakhs of His Highness' subjects were not given admission into that Department, it was highly disappointing. The assertion of their rights was the natural result of the liberal policy of educational advancement for which the Government themselves were responsible. The Member added that his object in repeating the subject so strongly and earnestly was to warn Government against any untoward thing happening which the leaders might not be able to prevent. There might be difficulties for Government to bring about changes in the present state of affairs which had been in existence for quite a long time. But a bold step should be taken to remove all difficulties.

Dewan's reply.—Noted.

161. Separation of Devaswoms from the Revenue Department.

Mr. K. K. Thomas B. A. & B. L. (Member, Nominated) said that the question of separation of Devaswoms from the Revenue Department was only a matter of detail in the administration of a Department and not a large question of general policy going to the vital principles of the State. Though the matter had been forcibly agitated for a period of 40 years, no satisfactory solution of the problem had been arrived at. It was admitted on all hands that the administration of Devaswoms at present was far from satisfactory. His friend, Mr. Thrivikramar Vasudevar, who represented the Jenmies on the Legislative Council, had described on the previous day how ill-managed those pious institutions were and urged the necessity for their separation.

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In the nature of things it was not possible for the Tahsildar, who was at present overburdened with so many important duties of administration, to find time to attend to the Devaswoms. He usually left that work to the low-paid underlings of the department. The festivals were mismanaged. The intention of the pious donors in instituting those trusts was entirely lost sight of. The object of those trusts was to minister to the religious needs of the communicants; but that side of the activity was conspicuous by its absence. Even the daily routine of the temples was not attended to. The Jenmi Member even went to the extent of saying that the sacred images were treated in such a way as to verge on sacrilege. The funds of the Devaswoms were being used by managers, not for the satisfaction of God but for commending themselves to the favour of their immediate superiors. Such a state of things was sure to bring divine indignation on those responsible for its continuance. It was, therefore, necessary that that state of things should be immediately put an end to, to save the whole country from a dire catastrophe.

There need not be any fear that the temples could not be managed except through official intervention. The Jenmi Member had drawn a comparison of the condition of those temples with the Christian Churches and mosques which were being managed without any element of Government control. A similar step might be followed in regard to temples also. The Revenue Department was in the hands of men who could find neither the time nor the enterprise necessary for all the sundry duties that they were saddled with. The Tahsildar had to attend to judicial work. If there was any dereliction, the High Court would come down on him. If there was any treasury work in arrears, the Account Office would take him to task. Any laxity in the revenue work would cost him his appointment. If he did not attend to the catering of the circuting officers or to the thousand and one tourists of note, he would incur Government's displeasure. So it would be clear that under the present arrangement nobody could do the work satisfactorily. The Treasury Defalcation case at Kottayam and several other instances might be cited. It had also been again and again pointed out that, unless the Devaswoms were separated, peculation and corruption could not be effectively checked. Any privilege that was peculiar to one community would be viewed with displeasure and resented by others. It was a well-recognised principle that, other things being equal, all should have equal opportunities. In justice to the 26 lakhs of His Highness' subjects, that invidious distinction should be removed. Their demands were not extravagant. What they claimed was bare justice to themselves and not that they should be granted any privilege or favour which was against the interests of any other class. In view of the strong public opinion in British India and the recent policy of the Government of Mysore in favour of separating even the judicial from the executive functions, the bifurcation of the duties of the Tahsildar from the Devaswoms was absolutely essential, not only in the interests of the aggrieved communities but in the interests of efficiency itself.

Dewan's reply.—Noted.

162. Some disabilities which the Muslim subjects of the State suffer and suggestions for removing them.

Mr. P. S. Mahomed (Member, Nominated) said that the educational advancement of the Mahomedan community had been engaging the serious attention of Government and that several concessions had been shown to them for which his community ever remained grateful to Government. But their social and religious advancement also required an equal amount of attention on the part of Government. The Member then submitted the following suggestions for the consideration of Government:—

(1) *Mahomedan Holidays.* The Almanac and Directory published by Government did not show the Mahomedan holidays. The number of holidays allowed to Mahomedans was very small. Barawafath, Ramzan, Bakreed, and Moharam 10th day should be declared public holidays throughout the State as had been done in British India and Mysore, and all Mahomedan holidays included in the Almanac.

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